

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-17, 19, 21-22, 40-42 and 45-47 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 19, 21, 22 and 42 are amended and claims 18, 20, 30, 32-39 and 48-50 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance; (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; and/or (3) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. More specifically, the above amendments incorporate allowable subject matter of dependent claim 20 (and intervening claim 18) into independent claim 1 and incorporate allowable subject matter of dependent claim 48 into independent claim 42. Thus, no new issues are raised. Entry is thus proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Office Action's indication that claims 3-6, 8-17, 20-21 and 48 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, allowable features of dependent claim 20 are incorporated into independent claim 1 and allowable features of dependent claim 48 are incorporated into independent claim 42. Thus, each of independent claims 1 and 42 defines patentable subject matter. Each of the dependent claims depends from one of the independent claims and therefore defines patentable subject matter at least for this reason. In addition, the dependent claims recite features that further and independently distinguish over the applied references.

Serial No. **10/034,380**
Reply to Office Action dated October 2, 2006

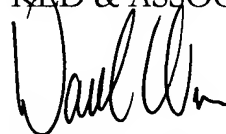
Docket No. **K-0387**

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-17, 19, 21-22, 40-42 and 45-47 are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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